

Project Title

Delta Studies Research Center
Wetlands/Lake

21,4
Applicant

Lincoln Unified School District
2010 West Swain Road
Stockton, CA 95207
Tele # 209-953-8714

2.2m-I-061

Project Description & Primary Biological Objectives

The project is located 1.3 miles west of I-5 in Stockton adjacent to the San Joaquin River. The project involves two phases. Phase I would be the development of a Delta Studies Environmental Research Academy with the sole mission to foster educational endeavors that promote the study and encourage the preservation and assessment of the San Joaquin Delta Region to better understand the important role this habitat plays locally, within the state and in a world environment.

The second phase will be the construction of a raised learning/research center on a district owned 50 acre parcel adjacent to another 50 acre environmental habitat and mitigation site overseen by the Center for Natural Lands Management. The observation center will be situated to provide an overview of the San Joaquin River and adjacent wetland areas. The intent will be a central learning center for all public and private agencies to apply practices and study all elements connected to the delta system.

The objective of phase I is to provide curriculum for focused studies and conservation efforts on the flora and fauna of the San Joaquin River and Delta Regions. The intent is to promote intelligent use of the Delta's resources including water, plants and animals through hands on projects and intensive research involving the Delta's biological diversity. It is estimated that in excess of 2,000 students each year will have the opportunity to become a part of the center in conjunction with public and private research firms and organizations. The objective of Phase II is to provide a physical facility with adjacent wetlands for housing ecological studies and research as well as a central meeting place for Delta concerns and management. With the facility improvements, students and public/private sector staff can collaborate in learning and implementation efforts related to the Delta.

Approach/Tasks/Schedule

The educational curriculum can commence immediately for incorporation into the districts programs. Activities necessary include curriculum development, attendance at the California Aquatic Science Education Consortium, staff training, purchase of a computer, clerical assistance and program coordinator costs. The specific elements of the curriculum include; Fish & Wildlife - Waterfowl nesting programs, Species of concern, Breeding gamebirds, Wildlife & Riparian rehabilitation, Aquaculture. Water - Water quality & biology, Delta water influences and contributors for re-vitalization.

The curriculum development team will: formulate goals & objectives, determine scope & sequence of the desired curriculum, review existing programs and develop assessment procedures to evaluate implementation goals & objectives. This process could occur during the fall & spring of 1998.

If funds become available, the district will team up with a steering committee comprised of a multiple of environmental entities for development of phase II, the Environmental Center & related research/implementation activities.

Justification for Project and Funding by CALFED

Habitats and priority species impacted by this project include all of those mentioned on page 3 of the CALFED guidelines.

The noted stressors for review and those which will be studied are all of those listed in Attachment 3 of the guidelines.

In essence, the district would like to expand on the CALFED program guidelines and use the center as a base to research, study and implement the items described in the guidelines.

Budget Costs and Third Party Impacts

Curriculum development costs for phase I is approximately \$20,000. Phase II development of the center and adjacent lake/wetlands is approximately \$2M.

Impacts to other parties would be invaluable. The opportunities to share and implement research findings throughout the delta system and related environs would be tremendous. The center could become a central clearing house for public and private agencies involved with restoration of the Delta. Also, educating the next generation, that will become leaders of our nation, is an opportunity this curriculum and center will provide.

Other parties involved include; City of Stockton, County of San Joaquin, U.S Army Corp of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Game and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, State Water Quality Control Board, AWWA etc..

Applicant Qualifications

Lincoln Unified School District opened in 1878 and currently serves approximately 9,000 K-12 students. The high school drop out rate is one of the lowest at 1.2%. The district successfully conducted an environmental conference in 1994, created two Life Labs for soils, plant and general science studies and developed a natural pond through the only state received environmental education grant in 1994. Environmental education staff within the district have exemplary backgrounds and dedication. The district was the first to participate in the rearing and release of trout into California streams.

Collaborative efforts will be pursued with the above agencies and the following organizations; Wade and Associates/ 20 years in environmental planning and National Grant Services/28 years of environmental planning and development provide extensive professional expertise necessary to carry out the project. It goes without saying that the DF&G and USF&WL have an extensive roster of qualified biologists in their department who will evaluate and provide input for the development of the project.

Monitoring and Data Evaluation

On going assessment occurs by the district staff of all curriculums and evaluation of research relevant to the Delta will be determined by the collaborative entities.

Local Support/Coordination with other Programs/Compatibility with CALFED

Support comes from the above mentioned agencies and it is anticipated that biology students from the San Joaquin Delta Region and Sacramento State University will be interested in monitoring results and frequenting the site for study and observation.

According to the CALFED Bay-Delta Program objectives, the resultant work of the this project will assist in determining factors that 1) will provide good water quality, 2) assess aquatic and terrestrial habitats in and along streams which influence delta flows and 3) assist in determining factors that will aid in reducing risk to the delta system.